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DEMOCRACY.

THE FIRST CENTURY OF THE NATIONAL LIFE.

IS POLITICAL SELF-GOVERNMENT A FAILURE?

BY JOSIAH RILEY.

SAN FRANCISCO:

JOHN H. CARMANY & Co., BOOK AND JOB PRINTERS, 409 WASHINGTON ST.

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

SAN RAFAEL, CAL., January 11, 1876.

JOSIAH RILEY, ESQ., Present:

DEAR SIR:— You ask if I think your Centennial essay, entitled "*Democracy. The First Century of the National Life,*" worth publishing. I have read the manuscript with interest, and believe it should be published, and distributed at the Centennial Exhibition, as a brief and logical reply to some important strictures on democratic institutions, as well as a clear statement of the fundamental principle underlying the institutions under which we have passed the first century of our national life.

Its explanation of the causes of our political shortcomings; its demonstration of the truth so pithily expressed in the words of the great John Adams—"Party is the natural enemy of the Constitution;" its pregnant suggestions for the further successful development of our system of government, by which the work now done by primaries, caucuses, and conventions, as well as the whole action by which parties subordinate the general interests of the people to their own, may be much more effectively performed by the people themselves; its conclusive arguments in favor of personal independence of action in politics, and its stirring appeals to young men, ought to be read and deeply pondered by every true-hearted American. Nor do I remember any compendious statement so clearly showing to the friends and aspirants to free government in other lands the true character of our political institutions.

Without special concurrence in all your essay contains, or forgetting that you declare it rather suggestive than didactic, I freely express the opinion, that, were it read and practically discussed by every citizen capable of doing so, it would be better for the country.

I remain, very truly, yours,

W. S. ROSECRANS.

DEMOCRACY.

CHAPTER I.

HUMAN CAPACITY.

FRANCIS GALTON, an English author, has written a work on "Heredity," or "Hereditary Genius," and also an article, which has fallen under my notice, in which are stated some of his conclusions in regard to the actual and relative capacities of mankind. Improvements in communication and other causes having made large nations necessary, their organization, he says, will involve many complicated interests and nice adjustments, and this will require very intelligent treatment. He is convinced that the best statesmen of Great Britain do not possess the ability necessary to meet properly existing requirements, and he says that in no walks of civilized life are the intellects of men equal to what is required of them. He admits that Anglo-Saxons are capable of grappling with the every-day problems of small communities, but he asserts that they are not competent for the more difficult duties of citizens of large nations; and he seems to believe that such incompetence equally characterizes the people of all the civilized nations. Hence, professions are adjusted on a low standard; the political insight of the multitude goes no farther than the surface, and from necessity the people follow few directions except those which their imperfect guides point out. Great nations are not highly organized bodies, but mere aggregations of men, all intent on self-interest, and held together by gregariousness and reverence for authority, tradition, etc.

Impressed with the necessity of some improvement in the quality of men, MR. GALTON has devised a method for the artificial selection of the more strong and intelligent, and for keeping them from contact and intermixture with the inferior, in order that by such means there may be finally secured the ability which he believes is now so generally wanting.

MR. DARWIN, after the labor of many years in collecting the facts which he has given to the world in regard to vegetable and animal life, does not reach conclusions so absolute as MR. GALTON in regard to the more complex being called man.

I must take leave to doubt whether we are yet prepared to enter an intelligent judgment upon the points presented. The fact that a race is not fully equal to the requirements of a given time should not be esteemed of much value, especially when these requirements result directly from their own researches and inventions. In progressive times, theory is necessarily in advance of the application it requires ; and this is well, for we cannot be too sure of the truth of our theories. Probably no people will ever be able to make available all their knowledge, this being prevented by various impediments of interest, habit, and inexperience in new relations, and many other related causes. But the desire to make their knowledge more fully available will be a constant incentive to their own improvement. While modern progress has not been so great as we could wish, and success in practice might have been greater, the results achieved are in themselves so wonderful, that, when viewed apart, they seem sufficient to satisfy, for the time, the most exacting.

In Great Britain there have been known causes of repression quite sufficient to account for all the incompetency which MR. GALTON'S evidence presents. It cannot reasonably be expected that a people reared under a narrow system, and many of them under very adverse circumstances, should manifest immediately the exceptional ability required under new conditions.

When MR. GALTON tells us that his countrymen are capable of grappling with the every-day problems of their own communities, the concession warrants the belief that, under prolonged equitable conditions, they will acquire sufficient ability to enable them to perform all the duties that their circumstances may require.

I have been prompted to this notice of MR. GALTON'S misleading conclusions, which otherwise might better have been left to the corrections of more extended research and wider observation, by the fact that they appear to have suggested to an American writer some political essays, in which he goes far in discrediting human capacity and in depreciating the value of human life.

This writer also takes very strong ground in opposition to the most characteristic principle of our constitution, which in other quarters is gaining increased favor and adhesion, and, according to high authority, is now the accepted and controlling principle of all civilized governments.

CHAPTER II.

STRICTURES UPON DEMOCRACY—VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, of October, 1873, says: "The theory and the practice of modern governments are now everywhere based, in varying shapes and varying degrees, on the desires of the people duly manifested. Ministers and emperors are ceasing to impose their individual will. They consult the nation, and ascertain its will through its deputies."

While democratic ideas are making such progress in the Old World, the depreciating strictures of our own writers should not be passed uncorrected, or at least not unchallenged. As MR. TITUS MUNSON COAN is one of this class of writers, who has given emphatic expression to his opinion, I will state, in as brief compass as possible, his more prominent ideas.

He believes that the modern idea of democracy originated from the doctrine of immortality and the idea of future reward and punishment. From these was deduced the infinite value of human life, which infinity reduced or raised human lives to equal value. The sequence of this was the idea of man's equal political rights. He thinks there are great differences in the values of human lives—that sometimes the death of one man would be a greater loss than would be the death of all the other people in his village.

This doctrine, he tells us, modern democracy does not like to hear, since it tries to convince itself that all men are equal. MR. COAN does not agree with this, and thinks each person should justify his existence by proof of his value to his fellows. The wrong estimate of the value of life, he says, rests upon democratic doctrine and practices, so that competitions are settled by majorities. Minority representation he thinks a partial corrective. To make laws regarding subtler questions of politics by counting the popular vote would appear to him but a primitive device, were we not accustomed to hear it called the best result of civilization.

Notwithstanding the different endowments of men, he admits their equality in certain rights, but says the list of equal rights possessed by unequal men has not yet been made out; though for all men, or all women, to vote upon highest questions, he is convinced, is not among these rights. He says, further, that while the law of nature prescribes that the fittest shall survive, it is the care of civilization to preserve the unfittest. The question is not intelligence, health, or strength. Life is held its own excuse for being, though the life may be noxious. Civilized men do their best to put a stop to vital competition. We must discour-

age the advent of weakness, ignorance, and crime. What we want is higher endowment at birth. Problems of reform are subtler and harder than most people suppose.

CHAPTER III.

DEMOCRACY, ITS ORIGIN AND PROGRESS—FACTS OF NATURE.

WHILE MR. COAN'S writings afford unmistakable evidence of liberal culture and of a properly independent spirit, they also, in my opinion, indicate clearly that he has very erroneous conceptions in regard to democracy and the causes from which it arises.

My own belief is that the first ideas of democracy, and its first results, are derived from that endowment of reason and of a sense of justice by which man is made superior to the brute.

The first step in the direction of democracy is taken when men begin freely to do by each other "the fair thing." From beginning to end this disposition to fairness, and this fair doing, mark out and measure the course of its progress. The admitted assistance which democracy receives from Christianity comes chiefly from the practical precept of "*doing as we would be done by.*"

The next important step in this direction is taken when it is found that there is mutual benefit in doing "the fair thing," and that, in this respect, duty and advantage are conjoined. Combining the elements of reason and justice, this fair doing becomes known under the name of equity, which, like the quality of mercy, is twice blessed, blessing and improving alike "him that gives and him that takes." And this blessing and improvement follow and result from equitable institutions, through all stages, wherever established. Beyond this, democracy is promoted by the fact that mankind have certain common wants, desires, and sentiments, the reasonable satisfaction of which promotes individual and common benefit. Thus is the common good assisted by the common interest.

The obstacles to democracy are want of reason, want of knowledge, want of justice—the uncontrolled excesses and abuses of impulse and passion—all resulting in false opinion, injustice, partiality, prejudice, hatred, and violence. While the reactions of equity are of mutual benefit, the reactions of evil, naturally, by counteraction, neutralize each other; selfishness opposes selfishness, partiality opposes partiality, hatred opposes hatred, violence opposes violence.

These results arising from the very constitution of human nature, it follows that, as evil neutralizes itself and good increases itself, naturally,

in this world, good should overcome evil. From these facts of nature, reasonable supporters of democracy deduce their opinion of its practicability. Even the one good faculty of reason might be sufficient for the control of evil.

KANT says: "Paradoxical as it may appear, the problem of civil organization may be solved by a community of devils, provided they have understanding. It runs thus: So organize and order a multitude of rational beings, all requiring universal laws for their protection, but each secretly resolved to make himself an exception, that, while they conflict in their private feelings, shall so counteract each other, that in civil relations the result will be the same as if they had no such feeling. Such a problem must be capable of solution, for it is not the moral improvement of mankind, but the mechanism of nature, of which we inquire.

"The republican system"—meaning the popular or democratic—"is the only one properly adapted to the rights of man, but also the hardest to establish and the most difficult to preserve; so that many maintain that it would have to be a community of angels, since men with their selfish dispositions are not capable of so sublime a form of government. But here nature comes in to the assistance of the universal will, so honored, but practically so powerless; and this by means of these same selfish inclinations. So that it requires only a good organization of the State (which surely is in the power of man) to array these forces against each other, that the one shall prevent or neutralize the effect of the other; so that the result will be, for this reason, as though neither existed. Thus a man, though not morally good, may be compelled to be a good citizen."

I maintain the proposition that a good organization of the State on the principle of democracy is the only form which is in accordance with true political philosophy, and that it is within the power of the American people to perfect and perpetuate their political institutions by loyal and unswerving adherence to this principle.

CHAPTER IV.

INJUSTICE AND IMPOLICY OF POLITICAL DISTINCTIONS.

I BEGIN with the statement, which, as it is to become part of my argument, is no concession, that there is every conceivable diversity in the physical, moral, and intellectual capacities of men, "each being the product of a given time and place, and of circumstances always peculiar;" and that the circumstances with which we have to deal relate to the natural world, and the men and women living in it.

There are many persons, among whom the writer is included, who do not believe that it is doing the fair thing to weigh down the weak or unfortunate in the race of life with political disabilities, and who think that this is as unwise as it is unfair. With whatever plausible ideas men may persuade themselves to favor exceptional law, it is a historical fact that all political exclusions have resulted in injury and injustice to the excluded, sinking them lower and lower in the human scale, and that this degradation has reacted unfavorably upon the country which has permitted the abuse. Doubtless most of the persons upon the value of whose lives MR. COAN places so low an estimate are the inheritors of the consequences of such injustice.

From the law of self-preference it follows that, when any class of men seek to procure an exceptional law in their own favor, on the claim of superiority, the reasonable and almost necessary presumption is that they either over-estimate themselves or have selfish objects. In any case, they are not safe guardians of the rights and interests of those excluded, more especially when they place a low value upon the lives of the latter. All of a man's interests are bound up in his life, and whether in regard to this world or the next, it is to him of inestimable value. The assumed superior man, who admittedly values it but lightly, cannot value highly any thing that belongs to the supposed inferior man. So great is the value man places upon his life that he will endure even slavery rather than to part with it, and the most abject condition to which you can reduce a man is when you gain control of his life. If life is not admitted to be its own excuse for being, blame not the creature, who had no part in the giving, but take the complaint to the Power through whose good pleasure his life was bestowed, and with whom are ever the issues of life and death.

However we may estimate the value of men's lives, we are bound by justice in our dealings with men to have some regard to their own ideas of its value; and if this obligation were not recognized by society, there would be but little security for life.

Human life cannot be supported under rude and unrelieved natural conditions. Without artificial protection, one of the coldest nights of a northern winter would destroy all the human inhabitants of our northern States. By the asperity and rigor of nature, and by the ruthless assaults of the stronger, men are driven into self-protection and society.

At this point, amelioration of the natural physical law begins, through the action of the higher laws of human nature, which, by art and culture, bring into existence new conditions favorable to higher life. Progressive amelioration marks the advance of a higher civilization. Might no longer makes right. Reason and justice assert their power. These do not allow that, through exclusion, any part of society shall be thrust rudely back, in helpless condition, upon the often untender mercies of physical

nature. Nor do they permit to the stronger discretionary power to cause such exclusions, however specious the pretense. Were it decided that unmodified natural physical law should be the rule of vital competition, justice would require at least equality of conditions. It would not allow that those who, by partial law or otherwise, have been placed at disadvantage, should compete on equal terms with those possessing every needed assistance and comfort. In no way can we so effectually prevent the increase of weakness, ignorance, and crime, as by impartial law. Every other means will but increase them.

Although MR. COAN disclaims any intention of setting up an exclusive society to glorify itself or to injure the weak, nothing is more certain than that to exclude men from a participation in political privileges enjoyed by others is to create an exclusive society, from which are likely to flow the results which he disclaims. Any scheme making exception in favor of any person on the ground of superiority has the fatal objection that it gives special favor to those already favored, than which nothing can be more unreasonable or unfair.

Look at the history of India. That country was once highly civilized. How do we know what plausible ideas of superiority were the origin of its system of "caste." No doubt the professed object at first was "to provide for the increased strength and happiness of coming generations."

Let MR. GUIZOT tell us what was the effect in India. "In India," says MR. GUIZOT, "one partial class has triumphed. The system of caste has succeeded to that of class, and society has fallen into a state of immobility." What was the origin of nobility in Europe but the claim of superiority, based on the success which was the result of superior courage, strength, and intellectual ability. Have they not been "the strong, the happy, the contented," and yet what does their history teach? The men of mark, to-day, throughout the civilized world, as a rule, have risen from what was once thought to be the unimportant and valueless part of society. Proverbially, men are not wise judges of each other, nor are they impartial judges. And all exclusive schemes are subject to the objection that, in creating them, men become judges in their own cause.

Of works on the subject of "Natural Selection," HERBERT SPENCER'S *Biology* is one most highly esteemed. I find by that, that when development has so far progressed as to bring its subject into harmony with its surroundings, a state of equilibrium is established, after which there is no further growth until there is a change of conditions. An exclusive or segregated community soon reaches this point, after which it does not improve until a new element is introduced. A democratic condition of society facilitates intercourse and constantly supplies to itself this needful stimulus.

The effects, however, in some cases, exceed what we could expect from regular development, which, in ordinary course, does not do its

work so rapidly. From the great height to which some men at once rise, it would seem that in them there must have been set free some repressed force, which, from unfavorable conditions, could not manifest its power in their immediate ancestry.

MR. COAN thinks the list of equal rights of unequal men and women is not yet fully made out. The list may not be complete, but it has reached fair proportions. In it are found all social and political codes of modern times, at the basis of which lies the doctrine of mutual obligations and rights. It includes all just laws—it being the special boast of every free country that every man is “equal before the law.”

“One would think,” says MR. COAN, “that the settlement of political questions by majorities was a primitive device,” and yet this device was not resorted to primitively. And DE TOCQUEVILLE says that while this might appear, the truth is, as will be found on reflection, that democracy could only come last in the succession of time and history.

Government must be controlled by majority or minority expressions. All minority governments have failed as to higher purposes. Should we not give governments of the whole community by the whole community a fair trial? I am afraid that MR. COAN’S perceptions in the matter have been confused by the operations of a party system which does not belong to democracy, and will be weakened and extinguished as democracy advances. Minority representation is a misnomer, but it may give to MR. COAN the right clue, as its effect is to widen choice, and this assists democracy.

The problems of reform, MR. COAN tells us, are subtler and harder than most people imagine. This is true in certain conditions. TURGOT defined finance as “the art of plucking the fowl without making it cry out.” This is a subtle and difficult art, and it can only be accomplished by stupifying the fowl or by shutting off its voice. The line of greatest difficulty, and requiring most careful scanning, is that which follows near the contact of the two extremes of society—the more fortunate and the more unfortunate.

If fairness is observed, it is not difficult to settle all questions between these extremes to mutual satisfaction. The great body of the people, under fair conditions, will see that there is fair play. It is because the rights of all parties have not been fairly considered that these questions are no nearer settlement in Europe.

Intellectual superiority has limitations. An able political writer in *Blackwood’s Magazine* says: “However active and vigorous an intellect may be, it never wanders very far from the domain of personal experience, at any rate with any chance of accurate investigation. In other words, a man’s generalizations are largely determined by his own habits and associations.”

Therefore, the best minds, united with the best dispositions, are liable to make great errors when they legislate on hard and subtle questions, in

regard to which they have no knowledge from experience. Hence the need of combining all experience and knowledge in perfecting public measures.

MR. COAN speaks of "voting on laws," though this is seldom done. I wish the practice were more common. The results might be bad upon parties, but they would give to many new ideas as to the action of the democratic principle. The practice is now resorted to only in regard to hard and subtle questions which have baffled legislators.

There are degrees of intelligence as well as of knowledge, and the first informed may not be so competent to make good use of their knowledge as some who are later in gaining their information.

To quote *Blackwood* again: "Intelligence as distinguished from knowledge gets little recognition now-a-days; yet we make bold to say that there is no audience in the world so desirable and so delightful as intelligent and curious listeners, who know nothing or next to nothing of the subject about to be unfolded to them. Their ignorance is an accident of all others most favorable to their instruction, and gives freshness and interest." Another writer has graphically said that an intensely interested people drink in information as the thirsty sand drinks in water.

If MR. COAN supposes that progress is chiefly owing to "special gifts in special men," let him read what BULWER says: "The precepts of knowledge are often difficult to extract from error; but once discovered, they gradually pass into maxims, and thus what the sage's life was consumed in acquiring becomes the acquisition of a moment to posterity."

Above all, it should be remembered that there are wills to be consulted, as well as opinions to be recorded—wills backed by the physical force of men not disposed to admit want of ability to consider of the things which concern them, and who, very naturally, have not faith in the wisdom or disinterestedness of those who would debar them from having a voice and a vote in the regulation of public affairs.

Now, the vote is the means of conciliating adverse will and producing peaceful concurrence in opinion, or at least acquiescence in cases which otherwise must be determined by force.

Nothing is more reasonable than that the prevailing opinion and will of a community should decide as to its own management. And to accomplish such peaceful settlement, despite MR. COAN'S depreciation, is the best result yet reached by civilization. One person may be right, and all the rest wrong; but, after full and fair discussion, the chances are almost in proportion to the numbers that this is not the case.

Scientific men say that the crucial test of their theories is in their reduction to popular form, not that there is any difficulty in making them understood, but the difficulty is in making them invulnerable to popular criticism.

CHAPTER V.

AMERICAN DOCTRINE OF POLITICAL EQUALITY.

MR. COAN thinks that among the equal rights there is not included the equal right to life or the equal right to vote.

We will examine this position.

All men have some things in common, but no two men are exactly alike. Hence men are infinitely diverse. To have a law exactly suited to each man, there would have to be infinite diversity of law. This is beyond the power of society. Diverse laws less than infinitely diverse would allow or inflict wide injustice. There should be no injustice. Hence there should be no diverse law. Laws should relate only to those rights which men have in common, and to those duties which are incumbent on all alike.

In things peculiar, beyond the reach of human universal law, each individual should be left to the control and freedom of nature, or to the operation of universal natural law. Now, from this I infer that if, as asserted, there are immense differences in the values of human lives, this is one of the things that must be left to the control and freedom of nature. Whatever you do to protect or assist one class of men, you must do for all others under like circumstances.

So in regard to the right to vote. Exceptional rights to a class of men who may claim to be, or who may be, superior, would be an injustice to all other men. There should be no injustice. Hence there should be only universal laws in regard to suffrage.

Perhaps MR. COAN, and some others, may be able to see in this statement on what ground our fathers declared that all men have equal natural rights.

The common duty of acting justly gives sufficient restraint to crime. The common right of protection to person and property is all that is needed for the preservation of the peace. The common rights of humanity are all that is required for the care of the unfortunate.

And what can be more reasonable than this view? If a man is superiorly endowed, or acquires superiority of knowledge, should he not be satisfied with the advantages these give, in the greater influence which he may command, and in the greater ability which he has for procuring those things which may satisfy his desires.

CHAPTER VI.

EXCEPTIONALLY VALUABLE LIVES.

IF, as MR. COAN says, there are supporters of democracy who do not like to hear that the death of one man might be more loss than the destruction of all the other men in the town in which they live, it is because they are conscious that so broad and imperfect a statement of the fact of human diversity is likely to mislead men in opposition to democracy, when the real fact does not in the least conflict with it, for we have examples, sufficiently striking, of exceptionally valuable lives which democracy has been the means of bringing upon the stage of public affairs.

We have had Presidents of our Union, chosen by the people, who have risen from humble and obscure life. ABRAHAM LINCOLN is an example in point. Probably, if MR. COAN had been living during the time of MR. LINCOLN'S childhood, and had visited the poor and ill-provided cabin in which, with his humble parents, he dwelt, he would not have estimated the life of the ill-favored, rough, awkward, and uninstructed boy very highly. Nor would he have been likely, in subsequent years, when the boy became a flat-boatman on the Mississippi, to have marked him down in his classification as one of his superior class of exceptionally valuable lives.

Now, supposing ABRAHAM LINCOLN, feeling within himself the restless aspirations of a great soul, had known that he was excluded from the right of voting, and that such as he could never hope to rise far above their present position; supposing further that MR. LINCOLN had read some article like that of MR. COAN, telling him that in some way every person must aid in the movement of the world, if his life is to be justified, and that, seeing no way open for him to aid that movement, he had taken MR. COAN at his word, and put an end at once to his unjustifiable life by plunging into the Mississippi River, would or would not the loss to the world have been equal to that of the man whose life was supposed to be worth more than all the lives in his village?

Who can estimate the boon which the principles of universal suffrage and of universal eligibility to office have given to our country in the benefits to be derived from human capacity sprung from humble stations in life?

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, PATRICK HENRY, ANDREW JACKSON, HENRY CLAY, DANIEL WEBSTER, MARTIN VAN BUREN, THOMAS CORWIN, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS, and ANDREW JOHNSON are a few of the names of eminent Americans of humble origin which present themselves in this association.

CHAPTER VII.

ONE OF NATURE'S MODES OF CREATING GREAT MEN.

THERE were interpreters of nature long before our day, and I present an extract, which comes to us, through unknown centuries, from out the great nation of the Chinese.

Said the Chinese philosopher, MENCIOUS: "When Heaven is about to confer a great office upon any man, it first exercises his mind with suffering and his sinews and bones with toil. It exposes his body to hunger and subjects him to extreme poverty. It confounds his undertakings. By all these methods, it stimulates his mind and supplies his incompetences."

May it not be that this preparation for high duties by nature is quite as effective as any that the weaker and more short-sighted plans of man can devise.

Thousands of names could be mentioned in support of the opinion that this quotation from MENCIOUS describes one of nature's favorite methods of producing true greatness in individuals of the human race; nor do the teachings of the more advanced modern scientists controvert the statement. We undervalue unproved men, and overrate those who have attained different degrees of success.

CHAPTER VIII.

LIABILITY OF MEN TO ERR IN JUDGING OF EACH OTHER'S CAPABILITIES.

WE have no true conception of the possibilities of different men, even of many with whom we are accustomed to meet, and with whom we are on familiar terms. *Blackwood* mentions HAVELOCK and SIR COLIN CAMPBELL, as instances "of the sudden blossoming out into heroic use and work of lives long held captive in the husk, unable to show what was in them. Both of them were almost old men before their powers could be revealed."

The utter absurdity of estimations, founded on the fact that particular men, or classes of men, have not yet exhibited special ability, and, therefore, that none can be expected from them, is so plain as to need no argument. All that can be said about them is, that we do not know what they are capable of doing. The lessons of experience teach us to be "slow to judge," and "slower to despise."

As for senior wranglers who exceed others thirty-two times in mathematics, there is just this to be said: If one man demonstrates a proposition, and another fails in doing so, we might as well call the difference a thousand as thirty-two. It is an unknown quantity that you cannot ascertain.

In illustration of this, college honors, it is proverbial, are seldom followed by great eminence in after life. It may be because the powers of those who gain the honors are unduly taxed, as precocity in general is not a certain indication of increased and robust power in later manhood, or it may be owing to certain aptitudes of the mind that a man may be brilliant in some things and dull in others.

Before people on this side of the ocean knew that so important a scientific investigation was in progress, MR. GALTON had collected facts, had formed his conclusions, and had devised and recommended a system "to provide for the increased happiness and strength of coming generations;" and this was by "the primitive device" of forming exceptional men into a "caste." As a scientific achievement, accomplished within so short a time, and in so narrow a sphere, it stands apart.

CHAPTER IX.

THE UNITED STATES COMMITTED IRREVOCABLY TO DEMOCRACY—ITS TRIALS—IMPROVING EFFECTS OF DEMOCRACY.

LET us see now what has been accomplished in another direction, in a wider field, that lies open before us.

The very proclamation of the doctrines upon which it was proposed to establish the new American system enlisted the sympathies of civilized men in every quarter of the world and brought us valuable assistance. These principles inspired our own people to unprecedented efforts and sacrifices, and, when our Independence was recognized, the nation stood committed to its own people and to the world, to establish and maintain those ideas of freedom and equality in behalf of which it had struggled. So far as it could be, this obligation was faithfully fulfilled, until the powerful interest in African slavery became an antagonistic element, which, by disseverance of the Union, threatened to destroy our existence as a nation.

Again, were the people appealed to in the same sacred cause, and anew was the Government, by the most solemn of all obligations, bound to so maintain and perfect its institutions, that "governments of the people, for the people, and by the people, might not perish from the earth."

Whatever course other nations may pursue we have no alternative. This nation owes to its people and to the world a debt more sacred, if possible, than its financial liabilities incurred during the war. The United States of America are irrevocably committed to democratic government. It accords with all our habits, has grown up naturally, and it has become a duty of patriotism, even for those who have doubts of the sufficiency of democracy, to assist, in good faith, in doing what they can to strengthen what is weak in our government and to amend what requires amendment.

While our system is more democratic than any other, it still lacks much of entire consistency with its most vital principle, and it will be more profitable to inquire, if in this fact, rather than in any vicious results of democracy, are not to be found the causes of things which give grounds of doubt or incite criticism.

If only our critics, domestic and foreign, will look forward with the same sharp-sightedness with which they insist on looking in an opposite direction, I think they will see how, with faithful adherence to real democracy, "the eternal order will unfold itself."

Having made some reference already to the laws of nature, it remains to add that they are in complete harmony with democracy, which I believe, in the enlarged sense, but a system of equity.

The requirements of equity being accordant with nature, and those peculiarities of mankind which cannot be reached by just human law being within the control and freedom of nature, it follows that a pure democracy is the only system in which nature assists in producing the widest benefits. Hence, we have a right to expect from the vivifying influence of democratic institutions improvements more rapid, more general, and more varied than any other system can exhibit.

Is this expectation justified when we look at the progress and condition of our country?

In replying to this query, I need not refer to its material prosperity. This is so evident, so surpassing, and so well recognized, that the allusion is sufficient.

Let us look a little deeper, and inquire how has it affected society in respect to individual improvement. We have a people not inferior intellectually, surpassing in energy in all the practical arts, and, despite adverse criticism, equal morally to any civilized people.

Millions, attracted by the benefits to be realized from our free system, have come to us, increasing our numbers, and adding to our wealth and resources. The greater part of these millions were the more unfortunate and ignorant from the nations of which they came, and while they are freely welcome, it must be remembered that their condition has not been produced, but only ameliorated, by causes existing here. This accession we have been called on to assimilate and improve.

Following this came the emancipation of the unfortunate, ignorant, and degraded slaves of the South, and their admission to the privileges

of citizenship, and, with all this, the burdens and corruptions at the same time attending our civil war.

It must be admitted that circumstances apparently less propitious can hardly be conceived. It would seem that there might be some great object in putting democracy, on its first appearance before the world, to so severe a trial. If it should be found capable of survival and extension under these influences, it might be conceded to be the fittest form of government that can exist.

We find that the foreigner who settles among us, inspired by the reasonable hope of improvement which is afforded, is unswerving in his fidelity to the nation; that he advances in knowledge, and, by his industry, improves his circumstances; that, as a rule, he takes an interest in public affairs, and strives conscientiously to do his political duty. He is solicitous that his children may have the best opportunities for education and for improvement in every respect. The children of foreigners, reared here, have little to distinguish them from those of American birth, being completely identified with the people. The world affords no other example of such results, accomplished in so short a time. In no country has more attention been given to education, in none are the facilities for instruction so great.

Since these results have been realized, may we not reasonably expect still more marked and striking intellectual and moral improvement in our people from the continued and cumulative effect of the same causes, superadded to the additional causes of the same nature that may arise from the bettering of our political institutions.

No sooner did the decree of emancipation take effect, than the freedmen began, with great earnestness, to seek for knowledge, and since that time they have steadily persevered in this pursuit, thus showing that increase of liberty immediately incites to improvement even those whose previous condition has been most unfavorable.

The results thus far of the tests referred to, applied under the most unfavorable circumstances, give reasonable assurance that our institutions will safely encounter and triumph over all future difficulties.

The principle of universal suffrage of rational male adults is so firmly established that it can never be receded from. All idea of going backward must, from necessity, be abandoned. To this policy the country is bound by the most solemn sanctions. That this is so is, in my belief, most fortunate.

CHAPTER X.

DEMOCRACY AND PARTY THE EXTREMES OF ANTAGONISM—PARTY
ASCENDENCY OCCASIONED BY A WANT OF ADDITIONAL
DEMOCRATIC SECURITIES AND INSTITUTIONS.

THE trials which I have mentioned are not the only ones, and, I may add, not the greatest, that our system has had to withstand, since it has suffered also from the dominance of party rule—party and democracy being in the extremes of antagonism.

How does it happen that democracy is weakened and trammelled by party domination? My deliberate and well considered reply is, that party ascendancy comes from the want of additional democratic securities and institutions.

First, The absence of any system of legal primary nominations by the the citizens at large has given parties the important advantage of extra-legal initial action, by means of which they have been able to confine the choice to their own nominees.

Secondly, We have failed to carry out in practice, through effective and easily established agencies, the doctrine of instruction, which was intended for control of legislation, direction of representatives, and their recall and substitution, on refusal of compliance with public will, the well understood unwritten law being "obey or resign."

These were essential guarantees, but the error was first in attempting to accomplish too much by a single inadequate provision, and also because no adequate means were provided for its enforcement in those matters to which it could apply. It was supposed that instruction could readily be given, through public meetings and by petition, the whole people acting. But party soon acquired control of the first named agencies, and the latter fell powerless, without notice or effect. That sentiment of honor, which with the fathers was more imperative even than written law, was scouted from party caucuses and conventions. In short, this provision failed altogether in its objects. The effect was to change the character of the representative from that of a delegate, under constant direction and control, to that of an independent actor, at discretion, in the whole field of legislation.

Thus we had substituted for direct responsibility, "virtual representation," which is pointedly and truthfully characterized by the *Westminster Review*, as "a delusion and a snare."

This change placed at the disposal of parties a vast means of abuse and corruption, of which they have availed themselves most freely. From time to time, attempts have been made by the people to correct

party abuses, but their efforts to this end have almost invariably failed. They have been followed usually by the success of fresh schemes for public robbery, more daring and far more extensive than those which preceded. Generally, each renewed experiment of reform has resulted in disappointment.

These facts so palpably attest the need of further popular control that I will not dwell upon the details of the demonstration.

The evils which I have described are assaults upon our system, and the checks upon these which I have indicated as necessary can have no other than a conservative operation.

Briefly, the additional measures necessary beyond those already mentioned are, first, the extension of the requirements of popular sanction, now confined in most States to the organic and a few specified laws; next, provisions, by means of which, under proper regulations, the people can hold voluntary elections, in times of urgency, and instruct or displace a faithless officer, substituting another, if they so desire.

I have already alluded to legal primary elections by all citizens. Inevitably, certain objections to this plan will arise at the first presentation. I will merely say, at this point, that democracy being accordant with that law of nature by which evils are naturally counteracted and good is consolidated, the necessary result of its extension is to increase the power of the common interest and the common good. Hence, the more nearly universal the suffrage, under proper democratic provisions, the more compact, the more effective, is this interest and this good. Hence, too, political arrangements which give the control of public affairs to partial interests are defective and injurious, and ought to be reformed.

MR. G. B. TYLER, an English author, says: "A crime committed touches directly the interests of only a few, but the many unconcerned in the particular case use their influence or support in favor of such a general rule as would be for the advantage of them and theirs, if the case touched them; so that, in fact, self-interest votes for common interest, and individuals, in seeking their own greatest happiness, promote the good of all."

This principle is clearly recognized in the philosophies of the day, and its inevitable operation is unquestionable. Even those who want exceptions in their own favor oppose every effort of others to a like end. This is the law of nature, binding nations, which can never reach full efficiency except through the means of a democratic system.

Whenever a man has as wide a choice as he can desire in the nomination of men to be chosen to perform the duties of public office, and is enabled to act independently, he will conform his action to his own interests and wishes. Party cannot then control him. The people so mingle and conjoin in their action as to make any other than voluntary concurrence impossible.

CHAPTER XI.

PRIMARY PUBLIC ACTION—OFFICIAL INFORMATION OF THE STATE OF PUBLIC OPINION.

MY conceptions of the right principles of initial action are:

First, That, by law, means of information should be provided, in order to ascertain what are the wishes of the people.

Second, Full facility and security should be given to every one in the free expression of his own desires at initial elections.

Third, Equal force and effect should be given by law to the vote of every man.

Fourth, Every possible facility should be provided by law for mutual interchange of opinions, and every encouragement afforded for the reconciliation of differences through comparison of views and mutual instruction.

Fifth, Provision should be made for the carrying out in law and government the agreements arrived at.

To secure the first object, it should be part of the duty of a registry or other suitable office to gather information, through legally appointed means, of the state of public opinion in each district, to the end that, by means of this information, the people may act with the better understanding in the discharge of their political duties.

The following provisional form, addressed to the voters, may give a more clear idea of the mode by which these views may be carried into practice:

“The People of —— County and State of —— To JONATHAN FREEMAN of Township No. 1: Whereas, a primary election has been appointed by law to be held on the —— day of —— next, in said township, for making nominations for officers of the County and State and members of the Legislature; and, whereas, it has been provided that, for common benefit, means shall be taken to gain information as to the state of public opinion: You are respectfully asked to write in the inclosed blank the names of those citizens whom you would prefer for the respective offices to be filled at the next election, in the order of your preference. Please also state what are the measures, if any, which, in your opinion, should be enacted for public benefit, giving concisely only your conclusions under the appropriate heads in the blank herewith—being by this expression not bound nor held in any manner, save that it is to be understood, on your honor, these are your present opinions of men to be chosen and of measures to be adopted.

“Within the thirty days which intervene between this date and the time given for making your return, it is hoped that you will improve all opportunities for intercourse and conference with your fellow-citizens, that you may, as far as possible, ascertain their wishes, so that these may be taken into consideration in the formation of your own judgment as to your duties in these matters.”

Within thirty days after return of information, it should be the duty of the registers to have the names of nominees and the conclusion of the information briefly and clearly summarized, of which notice might be published in the following manner :

“NOTICE.

“Whereas, the voters of ——— District, etc., by their returns, duly received and authenticated, have recommended the following persons to be named as candidates for the respective offices, to be voted for at the coming election, namely: [Here to be stated, under distinct heads, the names of the nominees and the number of voters appended recommending each candidate.]

“Now, by direction of law, I hereby notify all persons that the books of information of the state of public opinion of this district (or township) as to the matters upon which the people are called upon to act at the primary election, to be held on the — of ——— next, are now ready for examination and verification; of which information a summary has been given. Citizens are respectfully invited to inspect, correct, and verify the same on or before the — day of ——— next.”

While the foregoing illustrates the principle by a practicable mode of securing the desired information, doubtless other modes, combining convenience, effectiveness, certainty, and security against fraud or mistake, may and will be devised.

CHAPTER XII.

PRIMARY ELECTIONS BY ALL CITIZENS—THREE METHODS OF NOMINATION—EFFECTS UPON ORGANIZED PARTIES.

THE state of public opinion having been ascertained and published, as indicated in the preceding chapter, at the primary elections the choice of candidates might be based on either of the following methods:

First, Each voter to have one vote for each officer to be nominated; the candidates having the highest and the next to the highest number of votes being the nominees.

This would involve the least departure from present party usages. If the people should choose to adhere to old party lines, they could do so, each man voting for men of his own political views or party. This, in respect to party action alone, would be much more fair than present methods. The results would be, if the voters retained their party allegiance, that each side would have its candidate as before, to be voted for at the final election. By such action, it would be tested whether parties do, or do not, properly represent the wishes and views of their constituents.

The very mingling of the whole people in common would have an important effect. Independent men could vote with perfect freedom in the choices open to them, without obligation of any kind to party, it being the principle of the new system that the citizen is bound to nothing further than to accept the legally determined results.

To further promote unanimity among the people, it might be provided that any candidate, having two-thirds of all votes cast at a primary, should be declared elected, this being considered sufficient evidence that the people are not likely to attain, at a final election, a higher choice.

The second method for primaries is, that, as two candidates are to be voted for at the final election, each voter may vote for two persons for each office. This represents the exact choice, to be determined by the popular vote, and is based upon better reasons than the first plan. The highest two names for each office would be the nominees under the second plan.

The intelligent reader can follow out in his own mind the action of causes which would make this plan a still more efficient protection against party control.

The third method of cumulative, or, more properly speaking, preferential voting, is not quite so simple as the others mentioned, yet it involves no difficulty that the most ordinary mind cannot easily resolve. The plan admits of many adjustments. One method, which occurs to my mind, will serve as an illustration.

Let us call the power to vote of each citizen a unit, that is to say, 1. Instead of restricting expression to one or two names, as in the former methods, the voter may distribute his vote among three or four persons. We will divide his unit of power of voting into decimals. He expresses his preferences by the order in which he names his candidates.

Two names have the value of 5-tenths each, =1.

Three names have respectively, $5+3+2$ -tenths, =1.

Four names have respectively, $4+3+2+1$ -tenth, =1.

In making up the poll-list it is merely necessary to add, as in ordinary decimal addition, and point off, and you have the result.

Under either plan citizens could perform their political duties with perfect independence, and, to secure such means, all independent men should strive.

If all these means are not sufficient to give the people, and not party, the choice of candidates, preferential voting, at the final elections, would leave party without any footing.

In voting upon laws submitted to the people, each man will vote according to his estimation of their merits, or, if he is controlled by his personal interests, they will not be combined with those of a party. Of course this would disintegrate party, and, if you add to this, "Popular Instruction and Recall," you secure democratic ascendancy.

Improved methods and facilities should next be provided for final as well as for primary elections.

Whoever has reflected on the workings of our present methods will appreciate the advantages that would result from a system which would avoid the inconveniences, loss of time, the expense, violences, and other evils so well known, and make participation in elections easy and pleasant to all classes of voters.

That such a system, at once simple and thoroughly practicable, is easily within our reach would be herein demonstrated, were it not for the limited length prescribed for this essay.

The right principle once accepted, the practical and inventive genius of our people will soon devise the necessary means for its application.

The methods of public action, indicated in this chapter, are presented as suggestions to draw attention to the advantage and practicability of devising more effective means of unifying the public will and judgment, which, expressed through legal forms, is the law of the democratic system, under which we are to continue our national life. They are not presented as the best plans possible for attaining the desired results. Obviously, details would be impracticable in an argument so brief and general as this must be.

CHAPTER XIII.

ADVANTAGE TO VOTERS OF THE METHODS FOR NOMINATIONS SUGGESTED OVER THOSE OF CAUCUSES, PRIMARIES, AND CONVENTIONS.

THE principal object of all methods should be to obtain the most correct expression of public opinion and will with greater facility and certainty than is now rendered by party primaries and conventions, at less cost of time and effort to the public. Among these obvious advantages are convenience, certainty as to information, and efficiency of independent action.

In the single matter of aiding the voters in making up the tickets, and arriving at their conclusions in regard to public policy, these meth-

ods of legal expression and publication will be greatly superior to present party methods.

Sufficient time should be given, after the publication of the expression of preference, for deliberation on the results. A limit should be fixed, below which it would not be necessary to mention those who have been named by only a few of the whole number of the voters acting.

Official information should be given generally by publication, or to each voter personally, as judged best. A simple allusion to the benefits of this positive public knowledge in regard to prevailing preferences of those best informed—such as those of the legal profession for judges, those of commercial men for accounting officers, those of teachers for educational offices, and those of scientific and literary men for positions requiring scientific or literary attainment—is all that I think necessary to add in regard to the practical workings of the system, but I have no doubt that the reader will be able to enumerate them more fully in his mind.

All these results are within our power, and may be made easy of attainment; but as these are founded in reason, and reason must consider time, place, and circumstance, so let us make haste slowly in attempting their achievement; first convincing ourselves of what is needed, and then proceeding steadily, with the calm dignity and settled purpose which benefit the great work of perfecting and crowning the noblest of human constructions.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE NATURAL COUNTERACTIONS OF EVIL UNDER A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM ARRESTED ARTIFICIALLY BY PARTY DIVISIONS.

UNDER a true democratic system, the injurious actions of evil propensities are, to the greatest extent, removed. Party divisions arrest the natural counteractions, and assist the evil powers. There are some counteractions of mutual evil within the party lines, but these are limited and ineffective, while other evil powers, instead of being gradually reduced, as they would be under democratic sway, are so consolidated that they overcome the greater part of the good within the parties, and combine a fearfully effective evil force. The only security to society that remains when the government is in party hands is the counteraction of the opposition party. Whereas the law of democracy is harmony, and its aim is to secure from freedom of thought free concurrence of mind and the nearest approach to unanimity in political action, any near approach to unanimity, under party rule, is looked upon by patriotism with

dread and foreboding, inasmuch as the sole and insufficient security for the counteraction of evil is, in such cases, almost wholly withdrawn.

How frail and insecure is this reliance on the counteractions of evil through parties, will be evident when the reader refers to the obvious dangers of alliances of party leaders for joint assault upon defenseless public interests, of which alliances we are not without startling and instructive examples in recent occurrences.

To the danger from combinations of party leaders is added that which arises from the corrupt portion of their political followers; that is to say, from their lowest and most dependent adherents. These being without moral restraint change sides with the greatest facility, and are, in fact, a "balance of power," usually bought, and thus acquire unnaturally an importance far out of proportion to their character and numbers.

Both of these evils of the party system were very clearly and strikingly illustrated in the recent New York elections. In the election of members for the Legislature, honest voters were generally restrained by party ties from uniting in support of men who would have sustained the efforts of an honest governor to effect reform, while the corrupt leaders and adherents of party, taking advantage of this fact, and entirely disregarding party considerations when their own interests were in conflict with them, supported only such candidates as they were sure, if elected, would oppose reform.

In New York city, on the contrary, there was a temporary abandonment of party, by a majority of honest voters, in the election of men to certain important local offices. The result was that honest and competent men were chosen for these positions. Who can doubt that the result would have been equally favorable throughout the State, had the same spirit of independence generally prevailed in the State elections.

The limited and uncertain advantages of party opposition are still further restricted by the fact that their effect is to conceal from public view the common interests of parties, in patronage, irresponsibility, exclusiveness, and other abuses, by means of which they are, in effect, united against the public welfare. The failure of the attempt made a few years since to reform our civil service through parties, is an illustration directly in point.

CHAPTER XV.

DEMOCRATIC PHILOSOPHY — GENERAL LEGISLATION.

THE importance of this discussion justifies me in presenting the following extract from the writings of the German philosopher, FICHTE, setting forth, in general terms, democratic philosophy:

“In a civil polity, such as should be, such as reason demands, and the thinker easily describes, though he nowhere finds it, *and such as will necessarily shape itself with the first nation that is truly disenthralled*—in such a polity evil will offer no advantage, but, on the contrary, the most certain disadvantage, and the aberrations of self-love into acts of injustice will be suppressed by self-love itself. According to infallible regulations in such a state, all taking advantage and oppression of others, any act of self-aggrandizement, at another’s expense, is not only sure to be labor lost, but to react upon the author, so that he shall inevitably incur the evil that he would inflict upon others. Within his own State, and without it, on the whole face of the earth, he can find no one whom he can injure with impunity. It is not expected that any man will resolve upon evil for evil’s sake, notwithstanding he can accomplish it when only his own injury can result from the attempt. Man must either resolve to renounce his liberty, or he must apply his liberty to that which is good.

“When selfish evils no longer divide mankind, nothing will remain to them but to throw their united force against the common enemy and only adversary which remains resisting—uncultivated nature. Every disadvantage of the individual, since it can be no longer a benefit to any one, becomes an injury to the whole, and is felt in each member with equal power. Every advance he makes, human nature in its entirety makes with him.”

The principles which I have stated require universal laws as to the proper subjects of legislation, and the control and the freedom of nature in other things. Hence, laws should be general, never special, and amendments should only be such as, by making them more equitable, will give them wider beneficial application. All changes in the opposite direction should be vigorously opposed. If this is a correct statement, it follows that the greater part of our State and national legislation is not merely useless, but positively injurious. The impression that this is so is well fixed in the minds of intelligent men who have given thought to the subject, and in many of the States reform has well begun in this direction.

An able writer, in *Harper’s Magazine* for March, 1873, says that “general laws do not afford the required relief, unless special laws, within their province, are absolutely forbidden, and when the general laws have been carefully perfected, the courts should be empowered and required to declare such special legislation null and void.”

This should be made undoubtedly one of the highest duties of the judiciary. This principle, then, reduces all State and national law to near assimilation to constitutional provisions, and it should be elaborated and adopted with the same precautions, one of the most important of which is a submission to the consideration and judgment of the people who are to be affected by its provisions.

Now, the principle which is sound in the larger spheres of State and nation is equally sound within the smaller spheres, each of which, for its own purposes, is a political unit, a government of the whole community by the whole community. So far as local laws extend, they should be uniform and general.

This view brings with it the necessary conclusion that the larger divisions of State and nation must concede to the smaller spheres, respectively, control of their local affairs; and this accords with the well-established theory of government in this country, but of which, as well as of the principles herein set forth, much of our State and Congressional legislation is a constant violation.

This result arises in part from want of proper provisions, and in part from usurpations by the legislative bodies.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE AMERICAN SYSTEM—CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTIONS PECULIARLY A LEADING CHARACTERISTIC.

IF any feature of our parliamentary system is peculiarly American, it is that which exists in the constitutional conventions, and so far as it has been employed this feature has been found safe and efficacious. It entirely conforms with the requirement of uniform legislation, with which no other feature of our parliamentary system is in full harmony, and it is adaptable to every sphere of legislation.

The characteristics of this system, as shown by its workings and results, are:

First, The respectable and non-partisan character of the delegates, who are generally our ablest public men.

Secondly, The dignity and decorum that mark their proceedings.

Thirdly, The great care and attention given to the work in hand.

Fourthly, Freedom from control by personal and partial interests, and,

Fifthly, The framing of laws that bear well the tests of time and use, and therefore seldom require additions or amendments.

I need not say how important and necessary are all these peculiarities, since it must be evident, at the first thought, that they are the very things required in all our legislation.

Another peculiarity of this feature of our system is that it is never used unnecessarily, but only as occasion requires. Now, it seems that freedom of refraining from action when such action is deemed ex-

cessive is quite as justifiable upon principle, and sometimes almost as necessary, as freedom of action when action is properly demanded.

Our present systems of State legislation are at fault in both these respects, since they provide no assured means of authoritative action in an emergency occurring out of regular time, and no means of preventing useless action at that time.

We need sorely a better system, founded upon better principles, and such a system we have in our constitutional conventions—a system which but requires extension, with such slight modifications as will adapt it to new purposes, to give consistency and unity to all our legislation.

Let it not be erroneously supposed that methods which will prevent useless change in the more ordinary laws will permit more wanton change of fundamental law. In regard to this law, the popular will, for the most part, is fixed and permanent, and with the extension of this system no change in any sphere would be effected without popular consent. If danger from this source is still apprehended, a greater degree of unanimity might be required for the change of constitutional law.

Such an improvement to our system would be one of the greatest achievements of statesmanship yet realized, and I am happy to say that the people, in their efforts to find relief, are beginning to apply the leading principle of the system quite freely in special cases.

This is the natural beginning, and many persons already are willing to make the concession that important laws should be submitted to the decision of the people.

This concession, and others of less extent, should be gladly received, for in this, as in many other things, in order to go safely we must go step by step.

The success which will result in all cases of wise application, with reason and consistency, will continue to carry us forward toward the end. The system is at once popular and conservative, for no method can be more safe to all interests than that which requires that at every step all who are concerned shall be consulted, and that final action shall be taken only with deliberation and care.

To secure the liberty of non-action, it might be well to extend the time between legislative terms, and to make it the duty of the Governor, at the beginning of each term, to submit the question to the people whether they will have a legislative session. On the other hand, it might be provided that at other times, on general demand sufficiently unanimous to make it certain that the call is not for partial or factious purposes, the people, at their own will, could initiate the necessary action to give to that will force and effect.

CHAPTER XVII.

OVER-LEGISLATION—NECESSITY OF GENERAL LEGISLATION—LEGAL CONTROL OF NON-ELECTIVE OFFICIALS.

UP to 1867 the Legislature of New York had passed more than thirty thousand laws, and Congress, up to the end of its Forty-Second Session, had passed more than thirteen thousand acts and joint resolutions. Add to this what the other States have done, and we have an enormous body of legislation, nine-tenths of which, probably, was entirely uncalled for by popular desire or general welfare. It is easily to be seen that with the growth of the country it must soon become impossible for Congress to continue to legislate upon its present principles. It has already been driven by the pressure to codification, and the adoption of the principle of general legislation is but a question of a little more time.

When this result is reached, how easy it will be to bring Congress gradually within the control of the same system, and then how easily we could improve upon the British plan.

First, The legislation would be submitted to the people, and thus issues upon measures would be separated from issues upon men.

Second, By means of initial action the people could, at any time, inform Congress of their want of confidence in an administration, if such should be their general feeling, and upon the receipt of such information, duly authenticated, it might be made the duty of one, or both Houses, to convey officially this information to the President, and to call upon him to fix within a certain time a day for his appeal to the people as to his retention of the office during his official term, or, as the British say, for going before the country.

If he should not wish to abide this issue, his refusal should be declared a vacation of the Presidency, and the office would be occupied by his legal successor. Thus could be supplied the remedy for what many people not unreasonably think a constitutional defect.

Under this plan, also, the regular term of a President could, with safety, be extended.

The immense magnitude of the political, legal, and financial interests of the nation, in comparison with the largest private business, should measure the superiority of talent, sagacity, experience, and fidelity to be employed in their management. To secure the selection of the best public officials, it is necessary that their choice by the people should be separated from party and other irrelevant issues. Hence, the propriety of organizing the National Cabinet on the principle of the separate election of its members, and of their direct responsibility to the people, as

already partially practiced in the States, but with terms so arranged that the elections of heads of departments will not all occur at the same time, and never at the time of a Presidential election, so that the questions of retention or dismissal of each may be considered by the people apart from the general issues and special exigencies of party politics, one of the principle advantages anticipated being that it would enable the country to retain in office competent and faithful officials in those departments especially requiring experience. By such provisions, more exclusive devotion to the discharge of their trusts by these officers would be secured, and our administration of public affairs would soon be made to compare more favorably with the ordinary management of private interests, and we should be spared the public humiliation and pecuniary losses which have so often resulted from inferiority in training, experience, and management of the chief officers of the government, chosen as they have been generally for party prominence rather than for business qualifications, and during their brief terms of service often much more occupied by party than by public interests.

Moreover, by this arrangement the President would be relieved from burdensome and incongruous duties, and could more easily and impartially perform his proper duty, as expressed in the Federal Constitution, of seeing that the laws are faithfully executed.

Under such a well-methodized system of elections and of legislation as I have described, the duties of the citizen would be much less onerous than they are now under the system of special legislation and control of initial expression by parties—this being in accordance with the general truth that the better way is always the easier.

With only the healthful and needful exercise of the faculties which seek exercise in their appropriate functions, the people could completely control public affairs. This control would be greatly assisted by suitable provisions for better methods of public expression, which will suggest themselves naturally when all our elections, including the primary, shall be conducted on the principle of "nothing for the people without the people." It would bring into active participation in the management of public affairs a large class of refined and intelligent citizens, who are practically excluded by the present modes of conducting primary and other elections.

All conveniences of mail, telegraph, messenger, or otherwise, should be made available for the service; and all that can be should be done to make the performance of political duties agreeable and secure, and the means to this end should be in constant readiness for popular use.

Thus we have before us the broad outlines of a democratic policy which would supply, as to legislation, through the better means suggested by a costly experience, the control and security which the framers of our system hoped to accomplish, and which would regain for the people the

whole field of citizenship from which to select their agents. Necessarily they would employ, for the framing of general laws, more competent men than most of those who, by various means, now find their way into our legislatures.

As the concomitants of these changes, an efficient control and restraint by suitable law of officials who are not elective would follow, and with this would fall all that is objectionable and corrupting in official life, which should be made one of honor to the worthy incumbent.

CHAPTER XVIII.

POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE—SERVILITY TO PARTY A POLITICAL CRIME.

THE mind pauses at the contemplation, and, admitting the vital necessity of such reforms, considers of the means, of the time, of the efforts, of the progressive steps which they must require, and of the opposition which they must encounter, of possible discouragements from the failure, or but partial success, of ill-considered and insufficient trials. But from such contemplation arise distinct conceptions as to proper courses of action. The courses are novel; they will take us far away from the paths of ordinary practical effort, and yet through all I see with perfect assurance a final consummation of political results for the accomplishment of which mankind have so long vainly hoped and striven.

In these courses of action are involved the issue between independent citizens and political parties.

While in respect to this issue the reader may agree with me in sentiment and general opinion, he may not be prepared at the moment to accept my views as to the proper means, or as to the proper course of action. One of the ideas which has been gradually taking shape in my mind, and has now become with me a settled conviction, is, that in an association of the whole, the individual is bound to it by a sole allegiance, which, however he may ignorantly or wantonly violate, is still alone obligatory upon his highest honor and upon his enlightened conscience; therefore, that to join himself with any political association, and submit himself to its control and its decision, is a political, if a directly unpunishable, crime. Men have no right to make any committals that may debar them from making their best choice of things which concern the common weal; they are morally bound to maintain an attitude of entire independence, a word which perhaps only our fathers comprehended in anything like its full and true meaning, and one which, before the end of another centennial after that of 1876, is destined to be more brilliantly illustrated in action, and to find new and wider signification.

It is the citizen's duty, alike to his country and to himself, to make no concessions to, nor compromise with, political evil. If you tell me that this is practically beyond all human power, nevertheless I say it is his duty.

It is our duty to favor all that is good and disapprove all that is evil in ourselves. It is our duty to do the same with regard to our friends, our associates, and everywhere and in everything. We are bound to do all that we can to improve and perfect ourselves, our friends, our neighbors, our enemies, if such we have, and, more than all, our country. Do you tell me that this may be all very well abstractly, but that the things which we seek cannot be accomplished by means of such an attitude, or by such conduct?

I say, and I intend to prove, that this is the only proper position, and that such conduct is the only practicable means for their accomplishment. I call upon all men, young and old, to take this position, and to hold themselves firmly footed in it.

It has its reason in the constitution of democratic society. Committal to party is surrender to its control. The good that may be in you is then no further available for good use than may be determined for you by the party. Beyond that it is no longer available good. The evil that is to be practiced, you must in some degree assist. Therefore, I say, keep out of parties; stand aloof. When country and when patriotic duty are concerned you have no right to decrease by one iota the power with which, for your own protection and its benefit, you are endowed.

The great objects which have been mentioned cannot be accomplished through parties. They must be accomplished in spite of them. What sensible man goes into the ranks of the enemy for the purpose of assisting in gaining the victory for his cause? The application of the name of American citizen, pure and simple, is a title of honor and dignity as much superior to that of any party name as Hyperion to a satyr; yet none knows better than myself that for some time, perhaps for a considerable time, parties will control the machinery of government.

Even so, I insist upon my position. I say that there is no attitude a man can occupy that is so strong, and so effective in regard to practical results, as the attitude of independence. I do not mean by this dependence in so-called independent parties, for they are a serious mistake; but real, personal independence—responsibility only to God and your country. You cannot eat your cake, and have it, too. You cannot submit yourself to party, and yet hold purely unsullied that jewel of the soul, independence.

So long as we have the elective franchise, so long will this be the right attitude. I am not now speaking of the means for promoting personal and selfish interests, which neither you nor I have any right to consider beyond the degree in which we share the common interest. This is the

stern virtue, the genuine spirit, which only, at any time, is befitting Americans, and especially at this time of the near approach of the centennial anniversary of the Declaration of American Independence.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE POLITICAL ADVANTAGE OF SELF-INDEPENDENCE.

GOVERNMENT begins with self-government, and the man should govern himself on the same principle that he would have his country governed.

His powers and his duties correspond. Reason is his legislator, equity is his judge, and the will is his executive power. With these he is bound, while giving due freedom and exercise to all his faculties, to keep them all in due subordination. These are the conditions of his charter, the principles required by the constitution of his nature.

He has no right to surrender any part of the authority or obligation which these impose. He has the right, however, and it is his duty to effect, in every honorable way, all the good that he possibly can. Therefore, he has the right, and it his duty, to choose from all things possible those which he deems to be the best. This right and this duty place him in the very best of all attitudes for effecting beneficial practical results.

Admitting that parties have possession of the field, you can make them anxious competitors for your vote, and you are bound to secure the highest essential value in good, that you can secure honorably, for the use of this valuable thing; for it is the use that measures the value. You can choose between the parties, the best men nominated by them, pledged to the best policies, and least committed to evil.

Thus you will get the benefit of their competition, which you surrender by joining parties, and thus you will achieve "good by way of good, making right and justice means as well as ends." To say that men can join "party" without committal is equivocation or sophistry, for without some bond of honor or of interest among its members, there is no political party. Nor can political parties be held together without some such means.

The greater the number of independent men who will stand squarely and fairly on their own footing, the better results can we secure; still forcing better and better nominations, securing better and better laws, larger and larger concessions of popular power, thus gaining for democracy a steadily increasing advance.

You may, in time, frequently compel parties to nominate really independent men who will have no connection with or attachment to party, and pledged, upon sacred honor, to entire independence in the discharge of their trusts.

Even this may be conceded in the rivalries of parties for power, and this you may accept as pledge and surety for better behavior, not committing yourself further. When that day comes the end will not be far.

CHAPTER XX.

SERVICES TO BE RENDERED BY THE YOUTH OF OUR COUNTRY—INDEPENDENT PRESS.

THE view presented in the preceding chapter is not the only one in which we may see that the attitude of independence is the stronger. Parties, by dividing, misrepresent, restrict, and repress public opinion. We are in the habit of saying that "the ancients never knew such power of public opinion as we have seen exhibited in our own time," and upon a few occasions it has shown something of the potency which it will always possess under a purely democratic rule.

One of these occasions was the late civil war, which, by its pressing issues, broke down, in great part, the barriers of party.

By confining our allegiance to the single association of the whole community, we secure for our opinions the increased respect which our position and our greater power for good inspire, and the effectiveness which arises from the fact that our voice is enabled, without intervention of a dispersing or distorting medium, or other obstruction, to act or react with the greatest possible effect.

The true duty and interests of the press do not differ in any way from those of the man, and with the independent press, which is growing rapidly in number and power, we have a medium which will afford all the means of concentration that can be desired—a lever with which we will finally overthrow the adverse power.

I trust that those who have followed me with open and receptive minds to this point are now able to see, as clearly as I can see, through these means, the final and preëminently glorious end. I hope that these simple words may strike some responsive chords. I especially hope that some of our best young men in ability and character may see, and, seeing, may regard them.

If there are now any such, who, with bright and high ideals, stand discomfited and abashed before the dark prospect which the times offer

to them for a high and honorable career, let them take heart. Let them realize that loyalty to truth, to honor, and to country, requires no base subservience to low and corrupting associations. Whether established powers of mixed evil and good, or such powers seeking establishment, claim their support, on forfeiture of favor, let them not be concerned. By the newer and better rendering, seeking freedom out of diversity through union only of good, and deducing from like laws in things common and most necessary, and from the control and the freedom of nature in things diverse, the true doctrine of the equality of the Declaration, they are bound to no denial of the facts of nature, nor to recognize any claims for considerations or sympathy, whether from Conservative, Radical, or Communist, from man or party, further than his or their good qualities, or possibilities of good, demand.

Not only are they at full liberty to oppose and denounce evil wherever found, but they are required by the most binding obligations to do so.

To a field which now lies fallow, waiting for the upturning and for the sowing, they are called. And if they will heed the call, although they may not live long enough to reap their share of the full harvest, they will not have long to wait before receiving largely of the recompense of their reward, and more than they could ever gain in any other way by a thousand-fold.

There they can freely extend their sympathies and their good offices for the promotion of good in men, and may freely oppose with their whole force the evil.

I know not what German philosopher has left the injunction, "Never abandon the high ideal of your youth;" and never was left to posterity a richer legacy for instruction and guidance, contained in the same number of words. Give heed to this, young men, when you are solicited to abandon the path along which your highest ideals would lead you, for prospect of profit, held out by adhesion to some small or some great adverse interest, or when called upon to bow down and worship some idol of the hour.

Thus you will be saved the regret of many who, in a moment of forgetfulness, or of alienation, attracted by a false glare, have found too late the sad consequences of not following the safe and honorable course from which, with the proper use of their own light, they need never have strayed. Cherish within your heart of hearts, and maintain that "inbred loyalty to virtue which can serve her without a livery."

On the eve of the Centennial Anniversary of our National Independence, a fellow citizen whose opinions are derived from an experience of many years, passed amid the discussions and workings of our practical politics, sends this with greeting, hoping that this insufficient effort may take effect in some true and choice spirits, who may be willing to join in this great enterprise of moral power, and give it, with the opening of the Cen-

ennial year, a fitting initiation. He trusts that there may come from their exertions and their example such an outpouring of the pure spirit of independence, as, pervading the very air, penetrating to every fireside, to all of our halls of learning, and especially infusing itself into the minds of the editors and writers for the press, may so assert itself that it will give to none peace or satisfaction save in cheerful, and loyal, and heart-felt obedience to its inspirations; so that, when the representatives of all nations are gathered near the hall where Independence was declared, they also may feel its pervading influence, and realize from this that, in truth and at heart, we are not degenerate.

Although through our supineness and sufferance, party corruptions and abuses have caused our democratic principles and institutions to be misunderstood and maligned, yet the history of the recent exposure, trial, and conviction of leading political criminals in New York affords an instance of the value of personal independence in public affairs, and of the terrible efficiency of public opinion when, through the free and joint efforts of men from every political division, it is brought to bear directly upon an offender with its full power.

While good and able men permitted themselves to remain within party meshes, nothing could stay or control the evil, but when, as strong men, they rose to their feet, tearing asunder, as if they had been ropes of sand, the lilliputian bonds within which the party magnates thought them secure, then, for the first time, the evil doers confronted their adversaries with affright. In no act of their lives did the noble and honored men who then stepped forward to wage a determined warfare upon these public plunderers do themselves so much honor, or the people so much service, as in that controversy.

Perpetual honor to the men who assisted in this work, more valuable as a lesson and an encouragement than even from the amount it saved directly to the people.

CHAPTER XXI.

PARTIES ARTIFICIAL CREATIONS, NOT UNAVOIDABLE NECESSITIES.

TWO lessons are taught to us by experience and history—trust and mistrust. Trust of all we know to be good in ourselves or others; mistrust of all popular sentiments, impulses, and passions, when not kept in due subordination.

We are bound to repress the excesses of these. In accordance with our general duty we are bound to withhold temptation to evil, and, in this respect, as a people we have been guilty of a grievous sin of omission, in

regard to which there can not be too speedily amendment. And this consists in the allowance of the growth and continuance of that almost irresistible temptation of public patronage and of irresponsible power. We are bound by every consideration that can influence men of honor, of conscience, and of good sense, to remove, at the earliest possible moment, this truly "terrible temptation." Even in the case of TWEED, if the public of New York shared no part of his crime, they cannot escape responsibility. With population and interests much larger than those of many States, they have permitted to remain in existence a primitive and crudely organized city government without proper division of power or efficient popular control.

Who can be so certain of himself as to be sure that he could have withstood temptation, had he found himself at free commons, within that narrow circle of power, where he had but to put forth his hand and pluck the seemingly unforbidden fruit.

I can see no way of removing such temptation, except by the application of the principles and the policy which I have pointed out.

From these I expect will come the overthrow of organized parties. And yet I know that by many persons parties are deemed a necessity. It is, however, evident and easily to be proved, that they are wholly artificial creations. DE TOCQUEVILLE noticed the fact long since, and traced out with some detail the actual process of forming a party, showing also how parties are constantly disturbed and threatened by the elective system. There are things which, if permitted, incur a temporary necessity of acquiescence in consequences.

Parties are no more necessities than are any other permitted powers, which hold their places through sufferance. We have seen a number of parties arise, flourish for a time, and gradually expire.

Whatever necessity there is in party comes from permission alone, is temporary, and, with proper means, easy of removal, while the necessity of emancipation from party is permanent and pressing, and now urgently demands national attention and effort.

Whatever misfortune may happen, whatever our experience, let us never believe in the final necessity of political evil. Let us have faith rather in that obstinate hope in human nature which has been well said to be the best proof of the possibilities within us.

CHAPTER XXII.

WASHINGTON'S AND ADAMS' VIEWS OF PARTY—HOPE OF A NATIONAL
REVIVAL OF PATRIOTISM.

WASHINGTON believed in the possibility of keeping party under control by the union of the good and by the power of public opinion, and he studied the subject with more care than any other of our public men. He said, indeed, that party spirit has its origin in the strongest passions of human nature, and we all know the truth of this.

So, also, have the impulses which lead to the commission of crime the same origin, and yet we do not doubt our power ordinarily to prevent and punish crime.

WASHINGTON appealed to his countrymen in the most solemn terms, to discourage and control this spirit, declaring it to be the "worst enemy of popular government."

JOHN ADAMS, in his concise and emphatic way, declared this spirit to be "the natural enemy of the Constitution."

WASHINGTON did not doubt that the government might be administered in all its functions without party intervention. He had sufficient proof that this might be accomplished by the great success of his own administrations, in which he permitted no such intervention. If party is the natural and worst enemy of the Constitution and of popular government, and if WASHINGTON and ADAMS believed this, they must also have believed that parties might be kept from control, or otherwise they would have had no faith in the long existence of either the Constitution or popular government. They have left us, however, no room to doubt what were their real opinions.

And now I think our people should call themselves to account for their want of respect and attention to one of the most deliberate, solemn, and impressive warnings ever left as a valuable inheritance to a nation.

There is no doubt that WASHINGTON, in this respect, represented the opinions of the greater number of the leading men with whom he had associated, either in the field or in the council. There is no getting over the plain fact that, as to this subject, he gave expression to "the faith of the fathers," and that from that faith, both as to conviction and as to practice, many of our people have lamentably fallen.

Notwithstanding the near approach of the Centennial, when, if ever, some attention should be given to these principles, I hear no voice raised, I see no writing giving the slightest intimation of a consciousness of this national neglect of the most affecting and solemn instructions; but we are constantly assured that that is impracticable which WASHINGTON so well practiced, and that that is impossible which he successfully and grandly accomplished.

Is this perpetuation of infidelity to the faith which was given us befitting when we are about to assemble and profess once more our continued adherence and devotion to the doctrines and principles proclaimed and supported by the men of the Revolution?

It would seem that the face should blush and that the ears should tingle, from very shame, when we realize this attitude of inconsistency in which we stand.

If no such infidelity exists, why is it that, at this time, it is necessary for some one to undertake, as I am doing, to prove to the American people the truths contained in the joint assertions of WASHINGTON and ADAMS, that party is the natural and worst enemy of the Constitution and democracy. I can reach no other conclusion than that the present ideas of many of our citizens are at issue with those of the man who was "first in war, first in peace," and is declared to be "first in the hearts of his countrymen;" and also at issue with the mover of the Declaration of Independence; and that through negligence they have failed in their duty of original and candid investigation, accepting at second-hand the opinions which have been given them by interested politicians.

In either view there is no ground for self-gratulation, and if we should conclude that generally there are no clear opinions upon the subject, this would not be very much better. It should be understood at once that truth admits of no divided allegiance. You cannot at the same time intelligently believe in the practicability of democracy and the necessity of party. If any hold to the latter doctrine, why do think of joining in the coming celebration at Philadelphia? Or why do they interest themselves at all in the matter? For the necessary result of party government is, that it makes the interests of the dominant party paramount to those of the nation, and this is in direct opposition to all the objects proclaimed and the purposes manifested by the national representation in 1776.

Is it claimed that the facts pointed out do not, after all, represent justly the views and feelings of the American people? Then comes up the still more important question, Why do they not, in some decisive way, attest and proclaim the faith which is in them? In the best view, we cannot but admit that, at least apparently, there is almost criminal indifference.

If the approaching occasion shall be passed over by our people without some suitable and unmistakable attestation of renewed fidelity to democratic faith, we can only be confirmed in the worst apprehensions. That men professing to be independent, and to love, cherish, and honor the spirit of independence, can permit this, I will not believe.

It cannot, I think, be otherwise than that this spirit will be kindled anew, and that it will spread and burn with the more rapidity and intensity from its very repression. Most ardently I hope that this may be the result, and that with renewed devotion to our American institutions, the men who shall there meet, and the whole sympathetic people, may

thoroughly awaken and arise, never again to fall into supine neglect of political interests vitally important to the existence of our republic; but that, imbued with the true and distinctive American faith, they may, by social prestige and popular approval, inaugurate the second century of the nation's life, giving impulse and energy to a movement which, before it shall cease, will have assured the accomplishment of all desired reforms.

How grand would be the consummation if, before the close of the celebration, there should go forth from some national assemblage of our best citizens, in the same city, a second Declaration of Independence, announcing in terms worthy of favorable comparison with the first, the true duties, rights and interests of Americans, inspiring to manhood and giving right impulse and true direction to patriotism. Then will have begun in earnest our final struggle with the only power which is yet capable of resistance, but under such auspices there need be no fear.

CHAPTER XXIII.

OUR POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE MAINTAINED BY SELF-INDEPENDENCE.

LET our independent young men, as their first duty, attach themselves to some honorable calling or employment, which will be the means of giving to each of them a place of his own, in which he may independently stand. From this position of power let him send forth his influence and voice. Let those not so fortunately established, not cease the pursuit of their aim of personal, as a valuable means of securing full political, independence.

Let the people encourage and sustain the trustworthy and effective independent press; and then let the work go on. The advantage will be overwhelmingly on the side of independence.

In the warfare of opinion, the party press will be no match for untrammelled men, for, says an able political essayist, "the utterances of partisans lack the warmth, the clear ring, the sharp edge which we find in the ideas which come straight from the heart and brain. This is why partisan speeches are so hollow. This is why the writings of able men in the leading columns of the chief journals so often lack edge and distinctiveness, and seem the work of an intellectual machine rather than of a living intellect. It is for this same reason that most men are so much smaller than nature intended them to be."

There is no doubt that the abler men and the more effective weapons will be on the side of independence. The pen, in partisan hands, soon

loses its point, but in the hands of independent writers it retains its sharpness, like Damascus steel, and easily penetrates the flimsy armor of the partisan. With this single weapon one strong man of genius shall with safety oppose himself to thousands, and one independent press shall put a "whole army with banners to flight."

CHAPTER XXIV.

INDEPENDENT MEN THE NEEDED PRACTICAL AGENTS FOR REQUIRED REFORMS.

I SHOULD explain more distinctly the meaning which I attach to true independence. It does not consist in persistence in conscious wrong, nor in the liberty of consciously doing wrong, for every man knows that there is no such liberty.

It consists, then, in the liberty of doing what we believe to be right, the liberty of pursuing that course of action within the law which we believe will best promote our own and the public good. It consists in freedom from personal and party restraint; in the freedom to maintain our personal honor, our integrity, our self-respect; in freedom to discard and oppose the blandishments of power, the incitements of false persuasion, the suggestions of self-interest; in freedom to hold and maintain our personal opinions against the sophistries of a false consistency; and in freedom to stand erect, firm, and immovable upon our own ground. The man of true independence, while holding himself firmly in this position, honestly endeavors, at all times and against every adverse influence, to do that which is reasonable and just. This is the jewel, consistency, which the poet tells us is so rare, and which is of such great value; and this is also the jewel of true independence, for true consistency and true independence fit together and correspond exactly in every part. Men thus independent are the most effective practical men for the accomplishment of good. Standing on their own ground self-possessed, their reason is more at command, their intellectual perceptions are more distinct, their minds are more free from false bias, than are the reason, the intellectual perceptions, and the minds of men who stand on party ground.

Independent men have a further advantage in the fact that the labor of advocating a cause which judgment and conscience approve, is far less difficult than that of advocating a cause in which it is necessary to use all artifices to which sophistry resorts. The one may be a source of unalloyed satisfaction; the other, in time, becomes a burden so oppressive as not to be easily borne.

When one who occupies an independent position, such as I have described, sees anywhere practical injustice growing out of any measure, even a favorite one of his own, he is convinced at once that there is some want of reason either in principle or application, and he sets to work with diligence to discover and correct the error. If he sees clearly that any measure is unreasonable in principle or detail, he knows at once that some where or in some way it must operate unjustly, and he works diligently to find where or upon whom falls the injury; and thus "science and reality, theory and practice, right and fact move ever side by side."

Is it not certain that the study of governmental science would be more fruitful in good results if it were pursued in the same spirit and with the same general methods by means of which the other sciences have been so rapidly advanced? The necessary conditions do not exist when those who undertake such investigation are not impartial in their own observation and independent in thought.

Between the charlatanism of party and the truths of science, which are we to choose? Shall we so far disregard the counsel of WASHINGTON as to prefer the "ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction" to "consistent and wholesome plans digested by common councils and modified by mutual interests?"

From the individual independence in political action, the ideal of which I have presented, we might expect every good. But the workings of the present party system are wholly adverse to the realization of this ideal; while the operation of the principles herein proposed will bring the whole body of the people nearer and nearer to it, and insure ever increasing approximation to that civic behavior which the father of his country so earnestly recommended.

No attention has been paid in practice to the best thoughts that have been given to the world in regard to government, and nothing can be more certain than that party will never direct the public mind to these thoughts, for it is the interested enemy of all truths which it cannot make available for its purpose.

What advocate of political reform will favor the maxims of a philosophy which are prejudicial to the interests of his party, when, to be a patriot, he must cease to be a partisan and lose political preferment?

Will not our young men called upon to take part in our political life look to this? If they will do so, they will find in the application of democratic philosophy themes more worthy and more attractive beyond all comparison than are the themes which are to be considered only in party connections.

Who can rightly estimate the measure of that just renown which would reward the more prominent of those who should assist in the successful application of these principles?

I need only state some of the subjects to which their attention might profitably be given, namely: The extension and perfection of the pro-

posed change in our legislative system; the provisions for legal popular nominations by all citizens; improvements in methods of public expression, including provisions for initial and voluntary action; the questions of instruction and recall, civil service, direct popular election of the President of the United States, of Senators, etc.; questions of free trade and financial policy; questions as to relations of labor and capital; questions as to the proper reduction of executive patronage, of organizing the national cabinet on the principles of separate election of its members, and of responsibility to the people as now existing in the States; more effective legal provisions for the detection and punishment of neglect of duty or malversation in office, whether the resulting public injury be pecuniary or come from the more secret and dangerous practice of using official power and patronage for party and private ends.

These and many other related questions furnish an almost illimitable field of open investigation. I may almost say they open politically a new world, and one that as yet has hardly been entered upon by the most adventurous voyagers, but which is a land more fresh and promising than any other that mortal eyes have seen. If we do not enter upon this land and possess it, how will this fact reflect upon our perspicacity and manhood? The work seems peculiarly suited to the large views and practical genius of Americans.

Have we no men of wide capacity who, in face of narrow views and petty polity, will come forward and assist in putting into motion more suitable political arrangements for the working of our democratic institutions? Are there none who are willing to do all that men may do toward effecting that "good organization of the State" which our citations suggest; and which, though thinkers easily describe, can now nowhere be found fully realized, but of which the foundations are firmly laid in our own cherished systems?

Let us bestir ourselves and not permit others first to show us the means by which we must accomplish our own appropriate work. Cold must be the heart, dull the perception, dim the intellect, that can not comprehend this high duty, and that is not stirred at the thought of its successful achievement. Shall we lack for volunteers to assist in saving the country from the dangerous currents in which, under party *régime*, it is now drifting apparently toward impotence, certainly toward dishonor?

Is it not time that the practices which have disappointed our hopes, and which have brought upon our country so much discredit, should prepare to give way? Is it not time for the hand-writing of some other and better power to appear upon the party walls, saying in terms that shall need no interpretation, "Thou hast been weighed in the balance and art found wanting."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE VICIOUS ACTION OF PARTY AS OPPOSED TO THE TRUTHS OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY CAN BE REMEDIED BY THE ZEALOUS CITIZEN.

MAUDSLEY says: "That which most effectually demolishes an old error is not a passionate attack upon it by an intensely feeling reformer, but a new and better creation, which gradually undermines it, so that it falls without trouble. Creation is a far higher work than destruction."

It will be seen that these ideas correspond well with the purposes and methods that I have suggested.

To recur to the question of a course of action: The first errors to be guarded against by those who may assume an independent attitude are impatience and over anxiety for immediate results. Beyond all question the right thing to do is, first, to impress upon the public mind, as thoroughly as we can, the conviction that the principles and policy which we advocate should take the place of those now in the ascendant. To this end, those who may devote themselves to this work should elaborate, in their own minds, plans which they are willing to recommend to their fellow-citizens, and criticize these plans among themselves, and amend them, until they seem proof against reasonable objection. Then should they present them and invite consideration and comment, note the worth and weight of the objections which may be made adversely, and act upon all good suggestions.

Let the preliminary inquiries be as thorough as circumstances will allow, each inquirer devoting more special attention to his chosen theme, and so perfect the plans and prepare the people that success will be almost assured from the beginning.

Conciliate all interests, so far as this can be done by reasonable concession, and shut out no one from participation, even the men at present most active in the sphere of public partisan life, but rather invite also these to take their proper part in the higher duties, adjusted by better standards and prompting to a higher course of action.

When we endeavor to concentrate public attention upon the chief cause of our political difficulties, it becomes necessary to personify parties, and hold them responsible. Yet we well know that it is not just to hold all adherents of parties morally responsible for the evils which they cause, but that many of these have much good in them which they will willingly make available for better purposes, when the better way is pointed out. It has been said that no two men are more unlike than is the

same man at different times, and, while this may advance a point beyond the strict truth, there is much truth in it. The best part of a man is always shown when by circumstances he is encouraged to act from higher motives. It has been noted that men, who in State Legislatures were violent partisans, were calm, dignified, and useful delegates in constitutional conventions.

Let us be just and place the chief blame in the right quarter. Almost every man can verify for himself the differences in the conduct of men in different associations. We ought to be conciliatory toward all that is good in men, receiving gladly from them all frankly rendered service, yet we may still wisely mistrust where there is indication or danger of sinister design, avoiding all improper compromise.

Men who have been in the habit of acting with party do not realize that there can be found any better way for the conducting of public affairs. Could they be convinced that there is such a way, many of them would gladly assist in securing its benefits. Even some of the party leaders retain their connection more from habit and long association than from any high regard for such organization. Many of the more active leaders but quiet conscience with the idea that, as profits and spoils are to be had by means of party, they are justified, as well as others, in taking their share.

While this is far from being a creditable position, it illustrates, in another way, what I have said on the subject of political temptation.

CHAPTER XXVI.

RADICAL CHANGES REQUIRED FOR CORRECTING ABUSES IN POLITICAL ACTION INEVITABLE, AND, SOONER OR LATER, MUST BE ADOPTED.

THE Chinese classics say that "an age of corruption cannot confound him whose armor of virtue is complete." But how few are they who are thus securely mailed?

The confounding here referred to does not necessarily mean personal implication, but that confounding or confusion of mind, the result of which is, that having eyes we see not, having ears we hear not, and having comprehension we do not understand. To remove this confusion and restore the sight, hearing, and reason, are not the least of the benefits we may accomplish.

In the ripeness of time, the public mind will be prepared for the changes which long existing political abuses demand. Then, in some of the States, laws may be secured providing for popular nomination. In other places, the submission of laws to popular vote may be more frequently

practiced. In places where the people are more fully imbued with the advantages to be derived from the suggestions I have made, and legal means are wanting, they may, by agreement, meet together in common, and conduct the primary elections in accordance with the new practice. They could also adopt voluntary measures for securing more accurate information as to the state of public opinion in their respective localities than party arrangements can afford. There need be no fear that the people will not accept these reforms. When they once understand them they will demand their adoption with such decision that the demand cannot be very long resisted.

The things which should be most carefully avoided are precipitancy and incompleteness of preparation.

Popular nominations once provided by law, the other changes required will be much less difficult. One by one they can then be secured by moderate effort.

Pending these results, those by whom they are favored may profitably assist in every good work that comes before them, as every change for the better will promote final success. While it is wise not to urge these changes too rapidly, there may arise meantime one of those great revivals of patriotic feeling which sometimes occur, and during which more may be accomplished within a very short time than in many years under a less favorable state of feeling.

The cause of independence will have need to protect itself, as no other cause should be better able to do, against the false pretenses of those who seek to make a good cause subserve selfish aims.

It is the action of the man, and not the name he gives himself, that measures his worth. Let it be seen to that the sacred name of independence is not abused in the same way that the names of liberty, democracy, and other well-meaning appellations have been abused.

When party leaders begin to see that independent persons are acquiring influence, they may hasten to tempt them with offers of place unpledged. It would be temerity in almost any man to accept such offers. Only the strongest, mentally and morally, could hold office through party assistance and come out of it with their reputation untarnished. In proof of this, the memory of all well-informed citizens of mature years will furnish abundant examples.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CORRUPTION IN OFFICE—EFFECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY ITS REMEDY.

MR. M. SMITH, a member of the New York Convention which met to consider upon the adoption of the Federal Constitution, said that, "in the States of Massachusetts and Connecticut, the people had regulated their elections on the principle of requiring a majority, but that this had never been inconvenient, and that the people had never been unrepresented." In one, and I am not sure but in both, of these States, it was provided, to the end that the people might always reach this high result, that there should be one election for nomination and another for appointment, on the very principle that I advocate.

In the same Convention, MR. LANSING said: "Sir, it is true there have been no instances of the success of corruption under the old Constitution, and may not this have been attributable to the power of recall, which has existed from its first operation. It has operated effectively, but silently. It has never been used, because no good occasion has been offered." In other words, because it being known to officials that there was "a rod in pickle," they avoided the delinquencies which would cause their castigation. Let us improve wisely upon the suggestion.

As regards questions of management of the finances of the people, the principles herein developed require the abandonment of the out-grown and now injurious plan of general appropriations, which but results in compounds of specialties, by means of which corrupt measures are passed from pressure of public necessity. The voting would be merely upon new authorizations or new retrenchments, and this could be easily done.

The existing practice of the annual voting of supplies for current and permanent expenses of government originated in the British House of Commons, having its reason in the peculiar organization of the British Constitution, under which it was deemed a necessary means of keeping the king and lords in check. Here, the same reason does not apply, as, under our system, the necessary restraint of officials may be better provided by other means. In any case, the government must pay for what it has authorized, and the important matter is to compel care in the obligations we incur. It is entirely useless to consume the time of our legislative bodies, and thus increase public expense by continual repetition of financial legislation. The practice serves no good purpose, but is taken advantage of by interested combinations, for the promotion of corrupt schemes, which, when incorporated in general appropriation bills, cannot

be easily excluded, and must generally be voted for under the pressure of business at the close of a session, or else the wheels of government must stop.

The advantage of considering each financial question upon its intrinsic merits is obvious, and instead of decreasing legislative control of finances, this will make such control far more complete and effective. Under a proper democratic financial policy, more exact and timely official information than is now furnished will be indispensable, in order that the people may know sufficiently in advance what the public requirements are likely to be, and thus may be prepared to vote upon new propositions intelligently; and to the end, also, that suitable general financial laws may be carefully elaborated and adopted. Under such a system it would not be difficult to secure better and more generally acceptable methods of taxation, and it would save at least half the time now wasted in useless or improper financial legislation.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE UNITED STATES THE MOST FAVORABLY CONDITIONED FOR HIGH NATIONAL ORGANIZATION—RATIONAL HOPE OF THE FUTURE.

I HAVE noticed the complaint made by MR. GALTON, that large nations are not highly organized bodies, but mere aggregations. I have tried to show what is necessary for the high organization of a great nation, and to prove that this depends on conditions without which no ability can accomplish that object, those conditions involving the existence of equity. In such a highly organized state as I have attempted to describe, every man can do more for his fellows, and more for himself, and for his own improvement, than in any other.

Injustice disables the nation in which it is permitted. It takes away from some parts of its people motives to exertion, and weakens the ties of country. Until the conditions of fair usage are established, the great nations of Europe cannot attain high organization. Men will labor vainly if they seek to devise schemes of organization which leave out justice. To effect a good organization, they must conform to nature and reason, by giving to all fair play. No invention of man so improves man, high or low, as equity. No system carries with it so perfect an assurance of prosperity as an entirely equitable system. For these reasons, our own country is the only one at present conditioned for high organization. This is within our reach, if we will be timely wise.

No society admits of high organization, whose restraints go beyond the limits of reason. In other words, democracy intelligently administered

is a necessity to all highly civilized governments. This truth has urged the European nations into the position admitted by *Blackwood's Magazine* in the extract which I gave in the opening, showing that those nations are now consulting the will and interests of the people. And the same necessity will compel still further concessions in the same direction. Nations can be organized highly, only when they can secure in their work of organization the willing assistance of all their people. Under such a system, the best evidence of the merit of a measure will be found in the degree of general satisfaction with which it is received.

There being no parties to oppose for the sake of opposition, none will be able to promote any selfish object by the defense of error, and every one will be interested in its detection and removal.

The advantages to be derived from such a change cannot be fully calculated, though of this we may form a partial conception. With the removal of the party control, and with the true action of the people, will appear more clearly the truth of the assertion that democracy, essentially, is but a system of universal equity.

Then will be evident the falsity of the idea of fixed minorities and majorities, and it will be seen that each expression stands by itself, being "the product of a given time and place and of circumstances always peculiar;" that there is perpetual change in the intermingling of the currents of human affairs, and in the growth and interchange of opinion, and that to attempt to divide these by determinate party lines is as vain as it would be to attempt such divisions of water and air. There is constant movement.

Political expressions and actions will become more assimilated in their nature to the action of an arbitration, all members of society taking some part in the settlement of their own differences, and striving with all the rest to secure that which is fair and right to each. Lives which in ruder times could not withstand vital competition may be most useful for purposes of high civilization.

The democratic system thus perfected will have the strongest possible cementing influence, and will give us an increased and renewed union, far surpassing in strength and value even the first. It will be beyond all power of destruction. Unanimity will enable society to forego without disadvantage some of the restraints now necessary, thus leaving more individual freedom than otherwise could be enjoyed.

But little legislation will be wanted. From certainty of punishment, crime will be much less common and its restraint much less costly. More than all, the greater criminals, the men of high powers and low morals, such as make usurpers and despots, will be controlled, and, instead of remaining the scourges, will become benefactors, of mankind. Public opinion will have a nearly irresistible power. Corporative associations, however large, will be easily controlled.

Under natural relations, men can employ to better advantage the powers given them by means of invention and machinery in the subjugation of the only remaining enemy, "uncultivated nature."

That these causes must raise our country to greater heights of improvement and prosperity is evident. Our conceptions can carry us but to a limited distance; our minds cannot compass the possibilities beyond. Leaving these to imagination, we may be able to foresee with more assurance the probable effect of causes with which we are now familiar.

We may suppose that in the natural course reforms which I have indicated, and probably others consistent with them of which we do not now conceive, will bring our country, within fifty years, into a position in which it will be able to govern itself more efficiently; and that before the centennial of 1976, it will have had an experience of fifty years under the new conditions.

Our extract from FICHTE affords a good view of what these conditions will be in respect to the control of evil; but what mind can now estimate properly the valuable results that will come to society from the increased effectiveness and power of good.

Without attempting this impossible task, we can follow so far the course of probabilities as to suppose that at the centennial of 1976 there will be another assemblage in commemoration of the first of the series of events which shall have carried the nation to the elevation upon which it will then stand.

We may indulge the hope that there will not then be such regret at national short-coming, or such apprehension of the ultimate failure of self-government, as now detracts from the enjoyment of our political blessings; but that this commemoration will be a simple outpouring of the heart in gratitude to God and to the men who at first assisted in the establishment of our national independence.

We may presume that the feelings of gratitude and thankfulness will not be able to confine their expression within the borders of our own country, but that those assembled will seek to make known the glad tidings of their political salvation to all the world. Amid these grateful renderings to those who have preceded us, let us hope that there may be cause also to remember with gratitude the services of the men who are about to take upon themselves the heat and burden of the day in carrying forward to success those measures now most necessary for the perfection of our system, and that their services may then be estimated as second in value only to those of the men who first devoted life, fortune, and sacred honor to the cause.

As the bell from the tower of old Independence Hall once proclaimed "liberty to the land and to all the inhabitants thereof," the proclamation then issued shall inform the world of the glories attending upon the advent of the *first nation truly disenthralled*.

And as the shepherds upon the Alps, when the last rays of the sun gild the most elevated peaks of the mountains, through their bugle-horns intone and call aloud for blessings upon the Eternal One, upon which neighboring shepherds, leaving their huts, repeat the words, so from that lofty moral elevation shall the men of that day announce to mankind the first appearance of a newly risen light, that never before "was seen on land or sea." Then, through all channels of communication, shall go forth to all lands the benediction—"Blessed be God!"

• Then shall all nations hear, and, hearing, shall repeat and send back the words: "Blessed be God!" when all shall unite in the ascription: "To Him, honor and glory evermore!"

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